

Professional and Cultural Name Use Task Force End of Year Report – 2021-2022

Membership

Chair(s): Robin Bryan and Samantha Prins

Members: Ruthie Bosch, Jennifer Kester, Brent Lewis/Cassidy Mechalske, Joy McBride, Gwyn Mellinger, Wolf Sherrill, Alison Waide, Michele White

Charge: As part of being a welcoming and inclusive campus, we recognize that many of our constituents routinely use a first name or full name other than their legal name. In recent years, JMU adopted policies and processes that allow for the use of preferred first names, and we would now like to begin the next phase of this work by exploring options for enhancing the use of preferred last names for professional or cultural reasons.

1. Identify naming options that can be supported and consistently applied within the confines of JMU's current systems
2. Desired functionalities for future JMU systems.
3. Exploring ways to best allow both legal names and preferred names (when desired) to be stored and displayed in current and future JMU systems.

Summary of Current Year's Activity:

Task Force members initially explored the various reasons motivating the establishment of the task force and known issues regarding incompatibility of systems with professional and cultural name use. Task Force members reached out to colleagues and units on campus (IT, DEI Directors) and off-campus (LGBTQ centers, listservs, HR departments at other institutions) to learn about professional and cultural name use in a wide variety of professional and cultural settings.

1. **Identify naming options that can be supported and consistently applied within the confines of JMU's current systems.**

For Students:

When a student applies to the university, they provide a name on their application for admission. This name is captured as the primary name in the university's student system. If the student applies for Financial Aid, that student's data is compared against data provided to the federal government through the FAFSA process. Changes to the primary name are managed by the Office of the Registrar and students must provide legal documentation of their name to support the requested change.

The student has the option of requesting a preferred first name using a request process in MyMadison. The preferred name is reviewed by the Office of the Registrar and if it meets the criteria for serving as the preferred name (is not obscene, primarily), the name is added to the student system as the preferred first name. Fifteen percent of students have declared a preferred first name.

If a preferred first name is declared, that name is substituted for primary first in approximately 32 integrations with downstream systems. In addition, it is displayed instead of the primary first name in numerous places that were prioritized – MyMadison, class rosters, email global address list (for example). Systems that receive the data via interface use the preferred name if their system allows.

For Faculty/Staff:

When a faculty or staff member is hired into a position with the university, Human Resources uses the Onboarding process to confirm the legal name of the new employee. That name is stored in the primary name field in the Human Resources system. Changes to the primary name require legal documentation of the change.

A faculty/staff member has the option of creating a preferred first name in MyMadison, employee self-service. Twenty-five percent of employees have declared a preferred first name. If a preferred first name is declared, the name is substituted for primary first in approximately 29 interfaces to other university systems. The preferred first is used only in three locations in the HR system.

2. Desired functionalities for future JMU systems.

- Allow maximum flexibility in name use for students, faculty and staff.
- Allow individuals to enter their last name and have systems use it as-is.
- Most important systems or places for preferred last name to be used, especially in the short-term before a CRM is available:
 - Canvas
 - Campus Directory

3. Exploring ways to best allow both legal names and preferred names (when desired) to be stored and displayed in current and future JMU systems.

Given that the Reengineering Madison program has been launched to implement enterprise Customer Relationship Management (CRM) and replace the Identity and Access Management (IAM), Human Resources, Finance and Student systems, fully modifying all systems to allow for additional name features at this time is not practical.

Although the Student and HR systems are used globally, the default for names is set at installation and JMU's implementations were completed between 1995 and 1999 and are set to the United States by default. The applications as delivered default to use of the primary names in most displays and as a result, customization of the base code is required to change the displayed name. In 2020-21, a major project was completed to support more use of the preferred first name with over 500 hours of custom development required.

Customization of these systems cannot be taken lightly. Both the resource required to complete the initial work, but on-going resource to analyze and reapply customizations whenever the impacted code line is redelivered is both time-consuming and costly.

Since some solution is needed to help campus constituents while the new IAM system implementation is completed, the Information Systems team brainstormed an interim approach.

Proposed approach using current JMU systems prior to CRM implementation:

- Programming will be completed to allow for the selection and use of a preferred last name to complement the existing preferred first name.
 - Students will be able to request the change of their last name through a process similar to that for preferred first with appropriate review by the Office of the Registrar. Faculty and staff will be able to add a preferred last name in MyMadison as they do their preferred first name.
 - Only the collected preferred last name and not the legal (preferred) last name will be used in key locations such as MyMadison.
 - We will prioritize a few locations for the use of preferred last name given the effort that is required and that many systems do not use the last name in displays. We would propose to enable Preferred Names for selected highly visible scenarios such as the Campus Directory, MyMadison, Canvas, Student Center, Mediat, Advance, and Card Services, but not in other scenarios.
 - The user will have no option to choose between preferred or legal (primary) names in different systems – if a preferred name is given, that is the one that will be used.
 - Total development and testing phase would be 964 hours minimum (389 hours on SA, 215 hours on HR and 360 hours on Identity).
- This programming would be targeted for completion by Spring, 2023.
- eID is an additional consideration with the implementation of a preferred last name that must be addressed. Currently, the eID is based on primary last name and is used to format the JMU email address. There may be some expectation that eID will change to reflect the preferred last name and JMU does not have a method for allowing an alias to be used as a substitution. New eID's would be based on Preferred First Name, Preferred Middle Initial and Preferred Last Name if provided. Existing eIDs remain unchanged. JMU Information Systems would find it difficult to support eID renames for existing eIDs due to the time-consuming, manual nature of the process.
- For clarity, the processes for implementing a legal (primary) last name change remain the same.

Proposed final solution within CRM implementation:

With the implementation of new systems, we have the opportunity to provide more detailed requirements for how names should work. A legal name will still need to be collected in the Human Resources and Student systems, but that name may be reserved for just those instances where a legal name is required – federal and state reporting for example.

Some requirements already documented will aid in the use of alternate names. For example, the Identity and Access Management system will have a new eID scheme that is not derived from the legal name. Aliasing, a model which allows the user to denote the name to associate with an email address, will greatly ease the challenges a constituent has in providing a preferred name through email.

Preferred names may be collected when a person begins association with JMU and may be used for display in systems and will be available to all university constituents.

Associated recommendations with interim and final proposed solutions:

- Consistent entry of names; feed the naming conventions into the data governance process.
- Think globally regarding name formats.
- Make it transparent how to change your name on Canvas and MyMadison.
- Clearly communicate the importance of honoring the use of preferred names.
- Clearly communicate the limitations of systems with regard to use of preferred versus legal first and/or last names where such limitations exist.
- Clearly communicate which external communications e.g., with parents, based on future systems will use preferred names and which will use legal names.
- Determine whether replacement JAC cards with preferred last name will incur a charge

Future Work:

If the interim proposal (working with current JMU systems) is to be implemented:

- Complete exploration around whether there should be limits on what is used as preferred last name by faculty/staff e.g., use of offensive names and what constitutes offensive.
- Engagement with relevant units and individuals including Faculty Senate, SGA, Employee Advisory Group, HR, regarding language for the recommended communication

